

VOICES FROM BEHIND WISCONSIN PRISON GATES

This is a newsletter written by incarcerated folks, for incarcerated folks, to share experiences, and connect with one another. It is edited and printed by the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee (IWOC) of the Milwaukee branch of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Please write to us if you have anything you would like to share: complaints, stories, drawings, poetry, whatever you like. You can submit anonymously, and we will remain in touch with you. But if you submit publicly, fellow incarcerated people can reach out to you! We will respect anyone's request to remain anonymous. Let us know if there are people in other jails or prisons we should contact. Our address is PO Box 342294, Milwaukee, WI, 53234. Wisconsin hotline is 630-415-7315. If you want to contact someone from our group via corrilinks email, add iwoc.milwaukee@gmail.com and we will send an email to open up contact with you.

VOICES FROM COLUMBIA

This prison (CCI) is slowly grinding itself into destruction, unknown to 90% of prisoners is this: CCI has teetered on the brink of being locked down this entire year, for no other reason but their SEVERE shortness of staff. I know you guys notice majority of c/os going from one unit right to another at shift change, then being here again at 6am... there is nothing we can do to fix that, but one thing we can fix is the struggle between us, the only form of effective and ALLOWED group resistance (meaning they cannot write you a ticket) is filing of complaints, and subsequent lawsuits. Now, those of us that HAVE the knowledge to do this ourselves are fortunate, my request to my fellow litigators is this: If they can't pay you don't let their rights be stomped on there is a difference between oppressors and the oppressed, don't ally yourself with the former of these two, it shows your true self. I would also like to say this to the people

who need helpwith legal work: If you can help the person doing your legal work help them. I helped someone on his suit and coached him on how to negotiate, and did everything he asked, he got a \$35,000.00 settlement, and he did absolutely nothing to help me. I never even got a pack of stamps from one of the Catalogs. I almost let that turn me into someone who is bitter and needs payment upfront etc... I didn't, but it was close, help these who help you it's the least you can do. And if you read this Mr. Tallman you know what you did. I hope you enjoyed your money.

– MATTHEW LABREC #531236 (Now at Winnebago Supervised Living Facility)

Here at CCI Mentally Ill & Disabled are still being treated abusively & denied treatment. Case in point. CCI prisoner Anothy Cox #63087 (have a form of Autism & ADHD, Anti-Social Personality Disorder, Anxiety Neurosis, Suicidal Ideations.) been held in segregation status. Cur-

rently doing a 150 DS. The psych. person, instead of helping continue to side-step issues with med. delays or withholding and ignore that seg/A.C. conditions are causing his mental health to continue to deteriorate. The HU-7 psych. person do a walk through once a month and that is what they exaggerate as available mental health treatment. But this person is such a liar and do not really help anyone, other than use the control status as punitive measure that most prisoners do not speak to her. All she do is create the façade to protect DOC from being liable. This same psych. person advocate keep people on AC if they do not speak to her (Brown Nurse her as some call it) when she do her once a month walk through.

– RAS UHURU #228971

I'm a person has spent over $\frac{1}{2}$ of all my time in segregation and I've been in Wisconsin DOC since 11-11-11. I have been in 2 fights in my whole time in prison in the state of Wisconsin. Segregation is a misused thing in this state. I know this because I have done time in CDCR and CYA in California. I know first-hand what segregation is for. And the state of Wisconsin has no idea or just does not care how or what segregation is doing to people. I'm in segregation right now listening to inmates yelling for help. No staff are coming and nor will they. I'm used to it now, but is that normal? Well after all the years I've done in segregation, it has made me not care too much about anything. I've been in segregation this time $2\frac{1}{2}$ months and I've not been to a rec cage not 1 time... I have lost most drive in my life.

Let me tell you a little about CCI segregation. Well Warden Dittman came up with a great idea to lock all the windows in DS-2 segregation! The warden does not like it when inmates talk outside the windows so he had them all locked and there is no way to open them. And since this has happened let me tell you DS-2 segregation unit has been a living hell.

All day every day, and this is no joke, I hear

inmates calling for help. It's so hot you have no idea. There is no AC and with the windows being locked its like an old fashion sweat box and people are falling out yelling and yelling for help. You have to see it for yourself.

Me myself I love it. It's just another thing that shows how much crazy stuff CCI can get away with. Non-stop people are doing "whatever" it takes to get moved out of DS-2 segregation unit to DS-1 segregation unit for AC. Guys are braking windows out, braking anything and everything or holding the meal traps until a white shirt comes and takes them to DS-1 segregation unit with AC. It's the craziest segregation unit I have ever been in now that they locked the windows.

So we will see what happens today. You might think I'm full of it but only if you seen what is going on right now in DS-2 segregation unit in CCI. Its safe to say its truly a Mad House, and this is not a 1 or 2 inmate thing. Try the better $\frac{1}{2}$ of all the inmates in DS-2.

Warden Dittman will not be the warden at CCI come next month. I don't know all the facts only we will be getting a new warden at CCI next month. But by a long shot locking all the windows in DS-2 segregation unit has to be the most crazy shit I have ever seen. I'm seeing guys cutting themselves to go to OBS in DS-1 unit for AC. It's bad beyond words. I would like to see the warden sit in one of the cells in DS-2 on a 90+ day. If its 90 outside it has to be 110 inside. A few days ago I know one guy past out 3 times in a row. Guys are doing whatever it takes to get out of DS-2 no matter if they get conduct reports or not. It's that hot. The unit Manager Ms. Walker just moved to other units in CCI because she couldn't put up with all the problems in DS-2.

It's that bad in DS-2 segregation unit. Staff that are told they have to work DS-2 "go Home." I see it with my own eyes and the Co's tell me. I hope you're seeing just how bad it is now. I've been in this segregation unit last year and the windows were open, and it was not like this at

all. I even told the unit manager how bad it's become since last year. Well unit manager Walker and lots of Co's will not work in DS-2 because of how hot it is and all the problems with inmates because they all want to get out of DS-2 and go to DS-1 for some AC.

Well I'm sure the staff at CCI will tell you that all the inmates in DS-2 are safe and there is no over-heating problem. I know for a fact they will not tell you the truth. How would it sound if they said "yes we are making them suffer?"

Let's just be real about the matter at hand. If the right people get wind of this somebody will lose their job. We need somebody to come into the prison and take the temperature in DS-2 segregation on a 90+ day. It really does not matter the day because if it is 70 outside its like 85 in DS-2.

You got to see it for yourself but the DOC will not let that happen.

After informing you of this matter at hand you should know this will bring me a lot of problems.

As much as I want to be public about this I know better because the truth will not end well for me and I know this so I must stay anonymous.

I hope you can help us at CCI and thank you for all your doing. I did enjoy your letter to Deputy Warden Kalen Ruck.

Thank you again.

– ANONYMOUS

Probation and Parole Dos and Don'ts: They can and will try to revoke you for almost anything. In 2007 Probation and Parole tried to revoke me for have a bottle of Alcohol in my house. NEVER WAIVE your rights to a hearing. The ALJ found me guilty, BUT he determined that three months on a PO hold was enough punishment. Never waive your rights. Also, Sometimes the police will attempt to use your PO as a stalking Horse. For example let's say that the police got a tip from someone on the street that you're selling drugs. The police

then goes to your probation agent, because they lacked probable cause, but a probation agent only needs REASONABLE CAUSE, but here's a tip... The Probation Agent MUST conduct the physical search or else it's a 4th amendment violation. Another thing that is fun is the "I'm not home" game. If your PO comes to your house and knocks at your door, without an appointment. You do not have to open the door. When the PO asks if you are home act ignorant and say you don't remember. Then ask the PO if this was a scheduled meeting. They hate that, even more they hate when you don't have a cell phone. Then the only times they can get in touch with you is when your scheduled.. work off of your time. Next time I write I'll teach you how to beat a polygram and Executive Directive #43 work rules. What you can write CO's up for.

– PAUL AMMERMANN #253696

The conditions at CCI are horrible. For last 3 mo. They have been violating the 4 hours a week rec. They don't even schedule for it. It's Mon-Wed and then those whom can't be brought out make up on Thur, Fri. The entire summer I believe our range in DSII we were give 3 hours of rec. I seen on the news the convention against long term seg. They were saying prisoners held for up to 22 hours a day. It's only about 2 hours a week. They force inmates to be doubled up in seg. They have a rule if their cell mate threatens or seems "aggressive", they will not open the trap till the next day. No food. No meds, nothing. Straight gulag style. Our range is considered the "bad range". So they deprive us of everything. We've went beyond 2 weeks w/out sheet. Its been 11 days since they've handed out toilet paper. They claim they have handed it out. Tooth brushes (the tiny ones that fall apart) have not been done in over 2 mo. For us on A/c they claim we have to do programs to get out. Yet offer no programs. Then lie on the paperwork we have refused it.

– ANONYMOUS

VOICES FROM GREEN BAY

Not long ago, I was staffed at DCI. As most inmates know, you must work at DCI to stay there. Because of this, they feel as if they may pay inmates at lower rates because it is considered to be a privilege institution. Most positions that would normally pay a rate 5, now only pay a rate 4. For some inmates that are blessed with people on the outside supporting them, many others rely on their wages to buy their basic necessities. \$5.60 is a big difference to a person that receives no outside monies coming in. To make matters worse, all the prices have been raised on our canteen items. If this wasn't bad enough, DCI's Kitchen Supervisor Pam tries to save the institution money by serving smaller portions and using half spoiled foods, just for a personal benefit of a pay bonus. All the best of the food is eaten by facility staff members, either in the kitchen staff office or the break room. All this is being used to exploit the inmates for the simple day room that is closed by 8:45 pm anyways.

– RAUL REYNOSA #657546

I sincerely hope this newsletter thrives until the WDOC is finally put out of business and that is precisely what it and other DOC's are; but I can do little from within the system to expose its evils except to point out that many more authoritative works have already been made concerning the prison industrial complex. Sadly however, there's a marked apathy among the vast majority of oppressed prisoners whom such exposes are intended to benefit, and this apathy is perpetuated by the mainstream media that want the general public to believe the system is anything but the insufficient counterintuitive and corrupt monstrosity that those on the inside are all too aware it is. The only reason Lincoln Hills garnered such negative attention is because the masses will only sympathize with prisoners if we happen to be under 18 too; even though the same abuses that get juvenile prisons shutdowns happen more often in adult fa-

cilities mostly because staff are confident that no one will believe a convicted felon over a guard even though the latter commits countless acts of misconduct in public office, a Class I Felony, every day. Courts and D.A.'s not only stuff the prisons to their breaking point but also cover up all their and the DOCs' corruption. The media ignore it unless its sensational.

– BENJAMIN WALKER #560144

VOICES FROM KETTLE MORAINES

Dear Voices brothers and sisters. For an update on a letter I wrote regarding the unbearable conditions at the Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution. I would like to inform you all that one of the subjects I wrote about has been resolved, with the officer being arrested for sexual assault of an inmate. I can also report that the results of his behaviors have yet to be seen. I'm talking to inmates who have suffered serious mental and physical damage as a result of the "reckless" disregard by this facility. Many, many, many inmates had made complaints regarding harassment and assaults by this officer.

So please, I'm requesting that this institution be investigated by way of the news media requesting interviews with the hundreds of officers who resigned or were released by the department of corrections, namely Kettle Moraine. The system they have created has been designed to create murders.

– ANONYMOUS

VOICES FROM OSHKOSH

The initial thought on the efforts of WISDOM and affiliate congregation and supporters is that their work of advocating for prison reform is righteous and noble—giving a voice to those unable to speak within the community and government is a bless beyond words. However, there needs to be a reflective assessment of the movement. From 11x15 to now there has been little to no true reform in corrections. Parole releases are a statistical illusion—in 2017, the Legislative Fiscal Bureau reported that the

rate of discretionary parole release for 2015-2016 fell to 2.1% for men and 2.9% for women inmates, compared to 75% and 81% respectively, in 1997-1998. That statistic itself is demoralizing to Old Law, parole-eligible inmates. Add to that the governments increased funding to correction and prison construction and increasing numbers of prison populations and the truth revealed is that WISDOM-ROC – is failing in its mission. There is too much division in the organization; resources are spread too thin to be successful in any endeavor. Unity can bring success. If all of WISDOM and its affiliate congregation focus on one area–parole, TAD, revocations, juvenile lifers, use of segregation – the influence and numbers are more likely to be persuasive. This is the truth; this is reality.

– JAMES P. HILL #271718

We've got to save our community And the babies! We must bring this foolishness To an end, Wanting to pimp our ladies! They are the Blessings handed from Heaven by God
To give you and I babies!
They must be respected
And in our society
We must have a connection
With our Grand-Parents and Parents's reality
To keep our children and our community safe in society!
We must bring the senseless killings to an end!
We must restore the love God has given us
To be family and friends!
The gang violence is out of hand!
We must begin to use our wisdom,
Love and knowledge to become righteous men!
The rapes and homicides must stop!
The hatred toward good cops must stop!
Every city's street block must prohibit drug dealers
Pushing heroin and drugs on our blocks!
The graves are filled with brothers and sisters
That were killed before their time!
We must become wise men

With our prolific minds!
The prisons are filled with men & women with good visions!
And many of us hate seeing what's Going on with Great MEN and GREAT WOMEN
In society filled with a lot of tension

And giving up their future vision (to be a gift)
And a community leader in society)
This is a true reality!
Lets save our community
And the babies!
Lets be respectful to all the ladies
And start raising our babies!
None of us would have any education today
Without having a mother
And a father! They were our first teachers
With common sense
We must respect the ladies
And listen to their righteous voices
Conveying to what they have to say!
Lets save our communities
And all the babies!

A Message:

It is essential for everyone to start loving one another and respect each other as human beings to keep all "deadly shootings" in checked!

The armed robbery, attempted armed robbery, car jacking and all other violence must cease to enjoy living in a safe neighborhood! Especially, the murder and rape must end!

The prison doors are closing their doors on our children in all walks of life! When people start living for God and mastering their attitudes, our society will be a place to enjoy raising babies to keep this world aware of our I-Cons we have lost and living amongst ourselves!

Three Strike Law

California is one of the States that quickly implemented a "three strike law" to lock away criminals who commits 3 crimes. The Legislators didn't considered the non-violent crimes; in short, if someone took a piece of candy from

someone without their consent, or stolen a radio from someone's car or store, or if someone was a party to a crime of selling reefer at five or ten dollars to a user, they could lose their entire life to the prison system that plays for keeps! Other States jumped on the band-wagon! Wisconsin has the 2 and 3 strikes law!

A lot of people don't know this until they get caught up and end up in prison studying the law. The penalties are very harsh! The individuals who lose their life to the three strike law or the two strike will have such a hard time trying to come from under the penalty that keeps violated offenders locked up for life! Even those individuals who made a bad choice and a messed up decision to live up to someone else's expectation!

The Re-entry Program "established" in California assist those non-violent offenders caught under the 3 strike law. Also, the individuals seek out to help free those violent prisoners that lost their lives under the 3 strike law having crimes like many of the Wisconsin Prisoners housed in over-crowded prisons! They are doing a good job of getting some of the non-violent prisoners free!

However, when legislators seek out to implement laws that takes individuals out of society, they be aiming at people who are living in poverty and have no legitimate job to secure their family or oneself! In short, the law is aimed at you and me!

Brothers and Sisters serving life without parole under the three strike law wish they could return to society ! They are constantly knocking themselves for being caught up under the 3 strike law!

Many of them may be a father whose child or children never met or miss their father everyday while growing up life! The same is said about women who gave birth to a child or kids and tried to hustle money to feed them or their drug habit or was a party to a crime. America calls itself the "Home Of The Free And The Brave!" But, who will help those of us who got

caught up , to become free again? So, we can say, "America is truly the HOME OF The Brave!"

Nevertheless, many legislators have forgotten about the intent of why "prisons" and "Reformatories" were build! The Old Saying is, "once you killed a criminal's spirit. He or she can be returned back into society. Now, it is all about the dollar sign - like kidnapping the slaves from Africa and making big money off of them! (Emphasis-added). YES, THE BOATS ARE NOT MOVING, but the chains on the feet of prisoners are like rain-drops seen in many states and falling from mother's, father's, and grandparent's eyes as well their kids's eyes!

Prisons are overcrowded with good and bad people! There are so many down-to-earth people in prison, today! These men and women can make a difference in someone's lives in society, if given a second chance! Yeah, instead of holding an individual for decades as they age - praying to God for another chance to be with their love ones! Brothers and Sisters in all walks of life, can never give back the years that we have served in prison! We are not getting any younger!

All we wants is the simple life to live, again! We wants our good to outweigh our bad! I have spent decades in prison and waiting for my opportunity to come, to be free from the shackles and chains that keeps me in the "Valley Of The Whale!" I have been ready to give back to the community for decades! Just like Nancy Ezell serving 65 years in Taycheedah unlawfully! She have served over twenty-years for allegedly trading a small portion of white powder for some Large Television! She has a druglord sentence! And to her, it's like the 3 strike punishment!

Crimes in our Home States wouldn't be skyrocketing, if many of us (Old Timers) could have their second chance to live, again in our Home State! We are not today's problem! We are the solution! Parole Us And You Will See!

- ANONYMOUS

I have subjected myself to a 7 year prison sentence, 2 years of reconfinement time, 14 months, 1 year eight months, 2 years nine months eighteen days, and many incarcerations in between at jails, police stations, houses of correction, secure facilities, and correctional institutions on different occasions. I'm directing the following message to everybody who is locked up that always complains about the injustices going on daily in prisons, jails, secure facilities etc...

I want to encourage y'all and let y'all know that we can do something to stop unfair treatment, discrimination, and every other atrocity from happening. We have to invest our time, energy, talent, effort, gifts, abilities, skills, and financial resources into educating ourselves, legal materials, networking etc...

We have to quit allowing the system to pacify us with things that are only meant to entertain us and stop over indulging in game playing. We have to spend quality time in the law library and strengthening our personal relationship with our creator.

– VENTAE PARROW #251535

VOICES FROM FOX LAKE

No wonder the suicide rate is so high in Wisconsin prisons. If you even mention suicide, they strip you down and place you in the cell with a turtle suit and a mat (the mat is what they use for kennel flooring). No questions asked, and it usually takes 24-72 hours before you're seen by a professional (i.e. psychologist). No soap to wash your hands before meals and then they serve you food, which is not finger-food, with no utensils. I had to eat soup out of a wax paper bag! I asked to wash my hands before digging in (I had just used the bathroom) and they said I was not authorized for soap! Try eating soup, canned fruit, mixed vegetables etc., from a bag and see how depressed you get. So I asked why they don't serve fingerfood (i.e. PB+J, raw carrots) and you know what they said? The DOC doesn't want to encourage men

to go on suicide watch. What?! She said if we serve PB+J, everyone would go on observation. What?! So in essence, they would rather people kill themselves than be bothered with a few false calls. I can tell you one thing. After that traumatic experience I will never say I am suicidal again. Even if I may be. I wish I had more space to tell how I was isolated from my support system while on observation as well (no letters, phonecalls, visits) but that will have to wait.

– JOSHUA WADE #355083

VOICES FROM THE EDITORS

Hey everyone! VOICES has some updates going on right now. This issue is our first to feature editors on the inside. While we've always sourced our content from inside submissions, based on reader feedback we're trying to allow incarcerated folks more say in how this newsletter is produced. As you may also have noticed, we've also got a brand new look that we're trying out! In addition to these, we've also been dealing with other logistical delays in publication. Thank you for being patient with us while this issue has been produced.

Thanks,

– VOICES EDITORS

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NOTICE TO MAILROOM STAFF:

Obstruction of this publication is a violation of both the sender's and the recipient's constitutionally protected right to free speech. Larry Fuchs, the DAI Assistant Secretary Chief, has reviewed this issue of the VOICES FROM BEHIND WISCONSIN PRISON GATES newsletter and said it would be allowed. We hope our subscribers receive this publication. Thank you for your cooperation.

About the Incarcerated Workers' Organizing Committee (IWOC)

The Milwaukee Incarcerated Workers' Organizing Committee (IWOC) is a part of the Milwaukee branch of the International Workers of the World (IWW). We stand in solidarity with all incarcerated people, and believe that while any of us are imprisoned, none of us are free. We seek to connect prisoners with one another, and provide support whenever a prisoner seeks justice against inhumane conditions. You are welcome to submit whatever you like to the next issue of Voices! Let us know if there are people in other jails or prisons we should contact.

Our address is PO Box 342294, Milwaukee, WI, 53234. Our Wisconsin hotline is 630-415-7315.

